

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for generating a desired alphanumeric character, comprising:

receiving a user's selection of a combination of one or more zones from a plurality of zones, wherein the plurality of zones abut one another, thereby eliminating intervening spaces to form a solid block; and

contrasting the combination with the remainder of said plurality of zones so that the combination is essentially removed leaving behind a graphic symbol in the solid block that resembles the desired character.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said plurality of zones are arranged so that the periphery around them is the maximum extent of every graphic symbol that appears when a combination of one or more zones is contrasted.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said plurality of zones form a matrix of solid elements that are of the same color.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the matrix has twelve zones arranged in four rows and three columns.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3 wherein the combination of zones has no more than two zones, and wherein each one of the 26 letters of the English alphabet and 10 decimal numerals is represented by a different combination of zones.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3 further comprising providing a plurality of mnemonic aids that represent a plurality of different alphanumeric characters, wherein each aid is depicted by a matrix of said plurality of zones that shows the respective combination.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the combination of one or more of said plurality of zones is contrasted with unselected ones of said plurality of zones, as the combination is being selected by a person.

8. (Original) A method for generating alphanumeric characters, comprising:
providing a plurality of selection zones;

instructing a user to select a combination, of one or more of said plurality of selection zones, that represents the user's desired alphanumeric character; and
providing a mapping between said selected combination and the desired alphanumeric character, wherein the mapping is based on a) representing each character as a juxtaposition of some of a plurality of open and closed curves, the plurality of selection zones being fewer than the plurality of curves, b) creating a template containing all of the plurality of open and closed curves, and c) aligning the template with the plurality of selection zones.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 further comprising:

enabling the user to select one of the selection zones in the combination, by one of a) depressing a respective push-button and b) touching a respective region in a touch-sensitive surface.

Claims 10-20 (Canceled).

21. (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture comprising:

a machine-readable medium having data stored therein that, when accessed by a processor, maps each of a plurality of alphanumeric characters to a respective selection of one or more regions from a plurality of regions that abut one another thereby eliminating intervening spaces to form a solid block, so that if the respective selection of regions were to be contrasted with the remainder of the plurality of regions, then said remainder, and not said selection of regions, would positively define a plurality of features of a respective one of the alphanumeric characters.

22. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 21 wherein the data is designed to allow said respective selection to be made via touch-sensitive screen inputs.

23. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 21 wherein the medium has further data that, when accessed by the processor, divides a display surface of a touch-sensitive screen device into a two-dimensional matrix of said plurality of regions, and allows said respective selection to be made via input events on the display surface.

24. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 23 wherein the medium has further data that, when accessed by the processor, displays a graphic symbol on the display surface that is aligned with the two-dimensional matrix, wherein the graphic symbol represents an alphanumeric character that has been mapped to said respective selection, so that a user can immediately confirm whether her selection resulted in the alphanumeric character she had intended to be retrieved.

25. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 24 wherein the data is to display the graphic symbol by contrasting the selected regions with the remainder of the plurality of regions in said matrix, so that the graphic symbol as displayed is substantially coextensive with the outside boundary of said matrix and at least a part of every contrast area that allows the symbol to be viewed falls within a corresponding region that has been selected.

26. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 25 wherein the data is to display the graphic symbol using a visualization area of the display surface that has higher resolution than said matrix, so that the symbol more closely resembles the alphanumeric character.

27. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 21 wherein the data is to treat the respective selection as one for which said remainder positively defines a closed plane curve located below a left opening plane curve, as in



which features belong to the character “a”, the respective selection having a first selected region located in a lower half of an arrangement of said plurality of regions and a second selected region located to the left and above the first region in said arrangement.

28. (Original) The article of manufacture claim 21 wherein the data is to treat the respective selection as one for which said remainder positively defines a closed plane curve located above a right opening plane curve, as in



which features belong to the character "e", the respective selection having a first selected region located in a upper half of an arrangement of said plurality of regions and a second selected region located to the right and below the first region in said arrangement.

29. (Currently Amended) An electronic system comprising:
a touch-sensitive display screen;

logic that implements an association between each of a plurality of alphanumeric characters and a respective combination of one or more regions selected from a matrix of regions that have been defined on the display screen as abutting one another to eliminate intervening spaces and form a solid block, via a user's manual action upon the touch-sensitive display screen, so that if the respective combination were to be visually contrasted with the remainder of the matrix then said remainder and not the respective combination would resemble one of the alphanumeric characters; and
a power source coupled to power the display screen and said logic.

30. (Original) The system of claim 29 wherein the regions of a given combination, that is associated with a desired character, are those which are suggested by one or more features of the desired character.

31. (Original) The system of claim 30 wherein the matrix is taller than it is wide, the desired character is "a" whose features include a closed plane curve located below a left-opening plane curve, as in



and there are two regions in the given combination associated with "a", the first region being located in a lower half of the matrix and the second region being located to the left and above the first region.

32. (Original) The system of claim 30 wherein the desired character is "p" whose features include a closed plane curve located above an upside-down "L", as in



and there are two regions in the given combination associated with “p”, the first region being located in an upper half of the matrix, and the second region being located to the right and below the first region.

33. (Original) The system of claim 26 further comprising logic that is to control the touch-sensitive display screen so that the respective combination is visually contrasted with the remainder of the matrix as an operator selects the combination, to produce a sensation in the operator of drawing the desired character.

34. (Currently Amended) A computing device comprising:
a data entry user interface;
an input control instrument;
said data entry user interface comprising a character output display area and an input control panel area, said input control panel area including a region responsive to said input control instrument;

a microprocessor;
a data storage device in communication with and addressable by said microprocessor;

data defining a set of character input signals ~~derived from the features of a system of stylized alphanumeric character glyphs~~, and data for forming visual representations of alphanumeric characters, being stored within said data storage device;

an input control matrix defined within said region of said input control panel area said input control matrix being switchable between a plurality of configurations, wherein each of a predetermined plurality of said configurations corresponds to one of said character input signals;

an input visualization area defined within said region of said input control panel area, the input visualization area and the input control matrix being positioned relative to each other so that one lies over the other with like parts coinciding;

said input visualization area comprising a plurality of sections that abut one another thereby eliminating intervening spaces to form a solid block, each of said sections being characterized by visually-contrasting first and second states, said input

control matrix, in response to said input control instrument, to define an input signal describing a selected configuration of said input control matrix; and

said microprocessor to receive said input signal, interrogate said storage device for a corresponding alphanumeric character, to form a pictogram of a corresponding stylized alphanumeric character glyph on said input visualization area, aligned with the selected configuration, and to transmit an output signal for said corresponding alphanumeric character to said character output display area of said data entry user interface.

35. (Original) A device as defined in claim 34 wherein said input control instrument is a stylus.

36. (Original) A device as defined in claim 34 wherein said input control matrix comprises a two-dimensional array of cells.

37. (Original) A device as defined in claim 34 further characterized in that:

- a) a glyph formation matrix is programmed into said device;
- b) said glyph formation matrix defining a two-dimensional array of sections; and
- c) said data defining a set of stylized alphanumeric character glyphs identifying preselected sections of said glyph formation matrix.

38. (Currently Amended) A method for inputting alphanumeric characters onto a data entry user interface, said method comprising:

a) providing a glyph formation matrix comprising a two-dimensional arrangement of regions in the data entry user interface for displaying a set of alphanumeric character glyphs, the regions abutting one another thereby eliminating intervening spaces to form a solid block;

b) providing an input control matrix, comprising a two-dimensional arrangement of cells in the data entry user interface, being coextensive with and aligned with said glyph formation matrix;

c) establishing a correspondence between a configuration of said input control matrix, defined by a combination of one or more selected cells within said input control matrix, and an alphanumeric character glyph;

d) receiving a selected configuration of said input control matrix; then

e) identifying a corresponding alphanumeric character; and then
f) displaying an alphanumeric character glyph that corresponds to said selected configuration of said input control matrix, by contrasting one or more selected ones of said regions with said glyph formation matrix.

39. (Original) A method as defined in claim 38 wherein the configuration was selected by a user addressing at least one cell of said input control matrix by means of a stylus.

40. (Previously Presented) A method defined in claim 39 wherein the searching for the corresponding alphanumeric character further includes applying an input signal to a microprocessor defining said selected input control matrix configuration; then

b) interrogating a data storage device for an alphanumeric character corresponding to said selected input control matrix configuration; then

c) recalling data from a data storage device defining preselected regions of said glyph formation matrix for representing said corresponding alphanumeric character; and then

d) providing said data in an output signal to an input visualization area of said data entry user interface.

41. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
providing a plurality of zones that abut one another thereby eliminating intervening spaces to form a solid block; and

contrasting a combination of one or more of the plurality of zones with a remainder of the plurality of zones, the combination having been selected by a user to represent a desired alphanumeric character, wherein the plurality of zones and the combination are such that, when contrasted, the remainder and not the selected combination resembles the desired character.

42. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
providing a plurality of zones that abut one another thereby eliminating intervening spaces to form a solid block; and

contrasting a combination of one or more of the plurality of zones with a remainder of the plurality of zones, the combination having been selected by a user to represent a desired alphanumeric character, wherein the plurality of zones and the combination are such that the remainder and not the selected combination forms one or more positive features of the desired character.